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Message Text

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72
ORIGIN SCCT-02

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 IO-14 EB-11 SCA-01 USSS-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-03 SS-20 /104 R

DRAFTED BY S/CCT:LHOFFACKER:SC
APPROVED BY ARA:HWSHLAUDEMAN
---------- 068755
O 180000Z MAY 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 104338

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS PINS, PFOR, AR, US
SUBJECT: STATEMENT BEFORE HOUSE INTERNAL SECURITY COMMITTEE

1. AMBASSADOR HOFFACKER APPEARED BEFORE HOUSE INTERNAL SECURITY COMMITTEE MAY 16 IN RESPONSE TO LONGSTANDING INVITATION TO ACQUAINT COMMITTEE, WHICH IS STUDYING TERRORISM, WITH PROGRAM WHICH EXECUTIVE BRANCH HAS BEEN PURSUING IN THIS SECTOR. COMMITTEE INDICATED BEFOREHAND THAT IT WISHED TO REVIEW PROTECTION OF PRIVATE US CITIZENS ABROAD. HOFFACKER THEREFORE DREW HEAVILY ON TEXT OF HIS REMARKS MADE EARLIER IN NEW ORLEANS WHICH APPEARED IN DEPT OF STATE BULLETIN MARCH 18, 1974.

2. SPECIFICALLY HE SAID, "WE ARE MINDFUL THAT OUR MANDATE COVERS ALL AMERICANS. AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN HAVE BEEN SPECIAL TARGETS IN LATIN AMERICA AND HAVE THEREFORE RECEIVED OUR SPECIAL ATTENTION. ... WHEN DISCUSSING SITUATIONS WHICH MAY FACE THE BUSINESSMAN ABROAD, WE EMPHASIZE THAT CONTINUING CONTACT WITH OUR EMBASSY OR
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CONSULATE UNDER WHOSE JURISDICTION HE FALLS WHILE ABROAD

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IS IMPORTANT. WE FACILITATE HIS BRIEFING BEFORE HE GOES OVERSEAS IF HE NEEDS INFORMATION ON SECURITY CONDITIONS IN THE FOREIGN COUNTRY IN QUESTION. HE IS URGED TO DISCUSS OUR SECURITY TIPS WITH THE EMBASSY OR CONSULATE IN ORDER TO ADAPT THEM TO LOCAL PECULIARITIES OR GROUND RULES.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE FULL US GOVERNMENT RESOURCES, INCLUDING INFORMATION, OFFICIAL CONTACTS WITH THE HOST GOVERNMENT, AND OUR EXPERTISE IN COUNTER-TERRORISM, ARE AT THE DISPOSITION OF AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN OR OTHER NON-OFFICIALS ABROAD. WHILE THE FOREIGN GOVERNMENT NATURALLY HAS THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROTECTION OF FOREIGNERS WITHIN ITS TERRITORY, THE US GOVERNMENT COMPLEMENTS THAT PROTECTION. WHILE WE MAY NOT ALWAYS AGREE WITH THE COMPANY OR INDIVIDUAL CONCERNED ON TACTICS SUCH AS THE ADVISABILITY OF PAYING RANSOM, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE STICK TOGETHER IN TIGHT SITUATIONS SUCH AS ARGENTINA, WHERE TERRORISTS HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF SERIOUS INTERNAL SECURITY DEFICIENCIES TO KIDNAP BUSINESS-MEN FOR INCREASINGLY HIGHER RANSOMS."

3. TESTIMONY WAS OF COURSE DIRECTED AT CONGRESSIONAL AND DOMESTIC AUDIENCE, BUT OPEN SESSION NATURALLY LED TO COVERAGE SUCH AS APPEARED IN YOUR PRESS. YOU WERE QUITE CORRECT TO RESPOND AS YOU DID TO FONOFF AND DANISH AMBASSADRESS AND YOU MAY REPEAT ASSURANCES GIVEN TO THOSE PARTIES AS REFLECTING USG SENTIMENTS. YOU MAY, IN WHAT-EVER WAYS YOU DEEM MOST APPROPRIATE, STATE THAT THESE COMMENTS, WHICH WERE PART OF GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, ARE NOT RPT NOT IN ANY WAY MEANT TO IMPLY DISSATISFACTION WITH ACCELERATED EFFORTS WHICH GOA HAS TAKEN TO INCREASE PROTECTION OF OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL AMERICANS AND INTERESTS. YOU MAY EXPRESS REGRET IF ANY OTHER CONNOTATION WAS SUSPECTED. RUSH

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